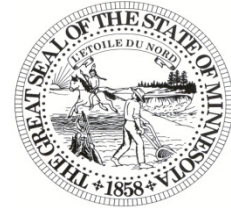




STATE OF MINNESOTA
Department of Commerce



ISSUED: OCTOBER 24, 2011

NOTICE OF PUBLIC INFORMATION AND SCOPING MEETING

**In the Matter of the Certificate of Need for the 98.9 MW
Ellerth Windpark in Marshall County, Minnesota
PUC Docket: IP-6855/CN-11-112**

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the Minnesota Department of Commerce Energy Facility Permitting (EFP) staff will conduct a public information and environmental report scoping meeting on the certificate of need (CN) application by Ellerth Wind, LLC (EW), to the to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) for the proposed 98.9 megawatt (MW) Ellerth Windpark (Project) in Marshall County. The purpose of the meeting is to provide information about the project and to identify issues and alternatives to study in the environmental report (ER) that will be prepared by EFP staff.

PUBLIC INFORMATION AND SCOPING MEETING*
Monday, November 7, 2011, 7:00 p.m.

**NEWFOLDEN COMMUNITY CENTER
145 East First Street
Newfolden, MN 56738**

***Prior to the public information meeting, the Applicant will host an open house beginning at 6:30 p.m.**

EFP staff will accept written comments on the scope of the ER until November 30, 2011. Please include PUC Docket No. 11-112 on all comments. Comments should be mailed, faxed or emailed to:

Larry B. Hartman
State Permit Manager
Minnesota Department of Commerce
85 7th Place East, Suite 500
St. Paul, MN 55101-2198
Fax: 651-296-7588; Tel: 651-296-5089
Larry.hartman@state.mn.us

Comments may also be submitted on the Commission's energy facility permitting website,
www.energyfacilities.puc.state.mn.us

The meeting will include a brief presentation of the state's certificate of need process, the proposed project, and how the public can participate in the certificate of need process. Representatives from Ellerth Wind will be present to answer questions about the proposed project. Members of the public will have an opportunity to ask questions, and propose issues, impacts, and alternatives to be studied in the ER.

Project Description and Location. The CN Application is for an up to 98.9 MW Large Wind Energy Conversion System (LWECS), including the following:

1. Anywhere from 43 to 61 turbines will be used; this number depends on the size and model of turbine selected. The three turbines under consideration vary in size from 1.6 to 2.3 MW. However, the total nameplate capacity will be limited to 98.9 MW.
2. Associated project facilities include gravel access roads, a step-up substation, a wind electrical collection system, permanent meteorological towers, installation of a supervisory control and data acquisition ("SCADA") system; and an operations and maintenance (O&M) building.

The project is located approximately two miles west of the community of Newfolden and four miles north of Viking in portions of the townships of Wright, West Valley, Foldahl, Marsh Grove, Comstock and Viking (see attached map). The project area encompasses approximately 33,709 acres of mostly agricultural land. Ellerth Wind currently has agreements with landowners over approximately 18,870 acres of private land within the project area.

Review Process. Two separate Commission approvals are required for the Ellerth Windpark – a certificate of need (CN) and a site permit. The applicant filed its CN Application on May 27, 2011. The Commission accepted the CN Application as complete on August 24, 2011. A site permit for the project cannot be issued prior to a determination by the Commission that the project is needed. The Commission CN process is the only process in which a no-build alternative and the size, type, and timing of the project and alternatives will be considered.

EFP staff is responsible for conducting the environmental review for certificate of need applications submitted to the Commission (Minn. Rules 7849). This review requires the preparation of an environmental report (ER). An ER examines the potential human and environmental impacts of a proposed project, alternatives to the proposed project, and potential mitigative measures. EFP staff conducts a public information meeting to gather comments and suggestions on the proposed project in order to focus the content or "scope" of the ER.

Upon completion of the ER, a public hearing will be held in the project area. The hearing will be presided over by an administrative law judge (ALJ) from the Office of Administrative Hearings. Members of the public will have an opportunity to speak at the hearing, present evidence, ask questions, and submit comments. Notice of the public hearing will be published in local newspapers and mailed to persons who register their names on the project mailing list (see below).

Upon completion of the environmental review and hearing process, the record compiled for the CN application will be presented to the Commission for a final decision. A decision by the Commission on a certificate of need for the project is anticipated in spring 2012.

Eminent Domain. Ellerth Wind, LLC does not have the power of eminent domain to acquire the land or wind rights for the project. Wind and land rights necessary to build the facility must be in the form of voluntary easements or lease agreements between individual landowners and the applicant.

Project Mailing List. Persons should contact the state permit manager (noted below) or register online at: www.energyfacilities.puc.state.mn.us to get their name on the project mailing list. Persons on the mailing list will receive notices of meeting and notices of document availability for this project. If you do not register to be on the mailing list you will not receive correspondence regarding this project after this notice. Project mailing list registration is voluntary and may be done at any time.

Project Documents. A more detailed description of the proposed project is contained in the certificate of need application. An electronic version of this document is available on the Commission's energy facility permitting website: <http://energyfacilities.puc.state.mn.us/Docket.html?Id=32308>. Additionally, documents are available on the Commission's eDockets system: <https://www.edockets.state.mn.us/EFiling/search.jsp> (enter the year "11" and the number "112"). The CN application is also available from the applicant's representative listed below.

Copies of the Application will also be available for review at the Auditor's Office in Marshall County, City Offices in Newfolden and Viking and with the clerks of the following townships: Wright, West Valley, Foldahl, Marsh Grove, Comstock and Viking.

Project Contacts. If you have questions or would like further information about this project, please contact:

MN Department of Commerce – Environmental Review and Site Permit. Please contact Larry B. Hartman, State Permit Manager, Minnesota Department of Commerce, 85 7th Place East, Suite 500, St. Paul, MN 55101-2198, Tel: 651-296-5089; larry.hartman@state.mn.us.

MN Public Utilities Commission – Certificate of Need Process. Please contact Bret Eknes, Minnesota Public Utilities Commission, 121 7th Place East, Suite 350, St. Paul, MN 55101, Tel: 651- 201-2236 or bret.eknes@state.mn.us.

Applicant. Brett O'Connor, Ellerth Wind, 381 Rue Notre-Dame West, Suite 102, Montreal, QC, H2Y 1V2, Tel: 514-842-1923; brett.oconnor@tcir.net

This document can be made available in alternative formats (i.e., large print or audio) by calling 651-296-0391 (voice). Persons with hearing or speech disabilities may call us through Minnesota Relay 1-800-627-3529 or by dialing 711.

